



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, D.C. 20240

Honorable John T. Doolittle
Chairman
Subcommittee on Water and Power
Committee on Resources
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter of August 16, 1999, to Secretary Babbitt asking about the Administration's authorities to implement the CALFED Bay-Delta Program in fiscal years 2000 and 2001. We have reviewed our existing authorities and found that several statutes provide broad authority to implement the work anticipated during these fiscal years (see enclosed).

Ten Federal agencies participate in the CALFED Program: the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) within the Department of the Interior; the Forest Service and the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) within the Department of Agriculture; the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA); the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) within the Department of Commerce; the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps); and the Western Area Power Administration (WAPA). Joining the Federal agencies are four California agencies: the Departments of Water Resources, Food and Agriculture, Fish and Game, and California Environmental Protection Agency and its Water Resources Control Board.

The CALFED Preferred Program Alternative contains eight program areas: (1) levee system integrity; (2) water quality; (3) ecosystem restoration; (4) water use efficiency; (5) water transfer; (6) watershed; (7) storage; and (8) conveyance. Within each of these program areas, CALFED identifies specific activities to be undertaken during Stage I (the first seven years after the Record of Decision), as described in the revised Phase II Report (June 1999) and draft EIS/EIR. While we have the broad authorities needed to implement CALFED programmatic activities anticipated for FY 2000 and FY 2001, after CALFED completes the EIS/EIR, the Administration will review existing authorities to determine whether additional legislation would be needed to implement the long-term program.

With respect to the Ecosystem Restoration Program, the work proposed to be undertaken during the first years after CALFED completes the Environmental Impact Statement/Report (EIS/EIR) can be accomplished within the parameters of authorizations that exist independent of the California Bay-Delta Environmental Enhancement and Water Security Act (Act). Nevertheless, because the Act authorizes funds specifically for ecosystem restoration, the Administration believes that Congress should extend that Act to assure an independent source of funding for the ecosystem restoration portion of the program.

2

We appreciate your continuing interest in the CALFED Bay-Delta Program and look forward to working with you and other Members of Congress to assure its success, including extending authority for the ecosystem restoration program.

Sincerely,

Patricia J. Beneke
Assistant Secretary
for Water and Science

Enclosure

Identical letter sent to:

Honorable Don Young
Honorable George Miller
Honorable Calvin Dooley

bcc: Secretary's File
Secretary's RF (2)
SOL, MS-6022
Exec. Secretariat, MS 7227
FWS, MS-3012
AS/FWP, MS 3156
OCL, MS 6242
WS (2)
Beneke/Brown/Cotton
WS:DCottingham:glb:208-4811:9/29/99